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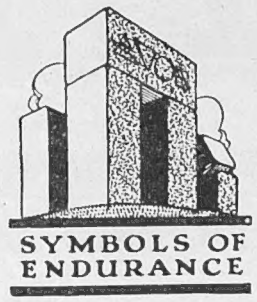

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THE SPHERE
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The Empire's Illustrated Weekly
London, June 7, 1941

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN TOVEY, IN COMMAND OF THE HOME FLEET, WITH CAPTAIN J. C. LEACH, ON THE QUARTER DECK OF OUR NEWEST BATTLESHIP, H.M.S. "PRINCE OF WALES": Both these Officers Took Part in the Pursuit of the "Bismarck"

Elsewhere in this issue the full story is given of the pursuit and destruction of the German 35,000-ton battleship *Bismarck*. For this purpose the British Navy assembled one of the mightiest arrays ever witnessed in naval history, and the sinking of the battle-cruiser *Hood* was avenged in a manner and with a rapidity which has aroused the whole world. Prominent in the operations was Admiral Tovey, the recently appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet, who flew his flag in one of Britain's newest battleships, H.M.S. *King George V.*: amongst the vessels playing their part in the pursuit of the *Bismarck* was H.M.S. *Prince of Wales*, sister of Admiral Tovey's flagship: the Admiralty report was the first intimation that this newest addition to the Royal Navy was actually in commission and in service with the Fleet. The above is an official photograph on board H.M.S. *Prince of Wales*. Her commander, Captain J. C. Leach, was formerly Director of Naval Ordnance: he was a Lieut.-Commander in *Renown* during the Duke and Duchess of York's Australasian tour in 1927. Admiral Tovey became C.-in-C. of the Home Fleet last year

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A WAR NEWSLETTER—No. 92

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

Crete—The Broad View.

—When the issue of the grim battle for Crete first began to look very unfavourable for us, the armchair critics and the faint-hearts and the defeatists began their discreet whispers. To do them such justice as may be, it is fair to say that no battle was ever fought in such a fog of general ignorance as to the conditions or with such delayed action in authentic news. "Another Dunkirk," "Another Greek rearguard action," "Another heap of war material and prisoners for the Nazis." And "When shall we learn from the Germans who understand the art of war?"; and "Courage is no good without weapons of defence and offence in the air and on land." "Why were there no large supplies of tanks and A.-A. guns in Crete? *We* were there first. We knew Crete would be stormed." And so on. Well, we don't know the answers to these questions very fully. We have had explanations concerning some of them—notably the abandonment of the Cretan airfields, though air critics did not accept those explanations very gracefully. Still, as of old, the armchair critic makes an Aunt Sally of the Army. The higher command of the Army is always at fault, always lags behind. (And the Navy is always right and always first from the mark.) I am not an armchair critic of strategy. I don't even pretend to know what may have been the Germans' next move after the capture of Crete, which they expected to accomplish in about a week without serious losses. It seems to me in my ignorance that all logic and all patriotism lead us to take a much broader view of the battle of Crete and to keep silence from any sort of criticism.

Delaying Actions.

—The whole essence of the War of 1940 and 1941 from our point of view is that we are on the defensive. We are fighting a delaying action. We are bridging a time-chasm. We are covering a time-lag. Dunkirk, Greece, Crete, are all part of that strategy. Wherever the Nazis strike, we must slow them down and kill as many of them as possible. The further they strike, the longer grow their lines of communication. The harder they strike, the more of their expert troops are eliminated, the deeper they dip into their limited reserves of petrol. The battle of Crete has not only upset their time-table badly. It has dipped severely into their vital reserves. Take the map of Europe and take a calendar in your hand. Look where the Nazi spear-head is. Consider what weeks of reorganisation must precede a giant thrust in another theatre. It is now June. In three months the best of the campaigning season in British waters will be over. For six weeks past our industries here have been working at full pressure, little disturbed by enemy action. Do not these facts justify our calling the Battle of Greece and the Battle of Crete glorious delaying actions, not only from the viewpoint of the splendid courage of allied troops, but from the bald strategic viewpoint? *Cunctando restituit rem.* The "miracle of the Marne" lies ahead. The strategy of Fabius is still our model for 1941, inevitably; and we have admirably copied it.

Wisdom while you Wait.

—It is still for us a waiting game—and will so remain for quite a long time. Only in one sense, of course, a waiting game. Our factory workers, farmers, soldiers, sailors, airmen and all the rest of the war-effort departments, from the highest to the humblest, cannot afford to wait for one minute. But while we work, we wait on the time when at long last we shall fight the Germans on equal terms of armaments; and, while we work, we sometimes listen to the news of current battles—and wait for that news! Let us cultivate wisdom while we wait; and wisdom means philosophy and restraint always in every department of life—as for

THE "LUFTWAFFE" ARE STILL DESTROYING LONDON'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS: This is a picture of one of London's most historic churches as it appears to-day. The Temple Church was founded in the twelfth century, and the present building was erected by the Knights Templars and consecrated in 1185. It was regarded as one of the finest of the four round churches existing in England—the others being Cambridge, Northampton and Little Maplestead in Essex. To-day it is in ruins, and many of its historic monuments have also been wrecked. It would almost appear as if the *Luftwaffe* had specialy selected this area for attention, so often have they launched attacks at this spot

FROM A.B. TO CAPTAIN, R.N.: After the *Bismarck* had been crippled by the big guns of the Fleet, the cruiser *Dorsetshire* was sent in (with the cruiser *Norfolk*) to finish her off. *Dorsetshire's* commander is Captain B. C. S. Martin, one of the most remarkable men in the Royal Navy. He began his career in the Navy in 1907 as a bluejacket boy, and in the Battle of Jutland he served in *Malaya* as a warrant officer. He is the second ranker officer to reach the exalted rank of Captain, R.N., since the commissioned ranks were opened to the lower deck in 1912. He was awarded his commission in the first lower-deck promotions after the Battle of Jutland

waiting for equality of armament. It is easy to be impatient and to declare that scores of Government pundits painted last winter pictures too rosy. In war there is many a slip. The Battle of the Atlantic, strikes in America; losses in Greece, losses in Libya—all these things have upset schedules. Despite them, our progress has been immense. . . . We have perhaps to swallow three months of *that* form of waiting, beyond the most conservative estimate. I often criticise the number and the diversity and the very moderate authority of the legion of pundits, put up or self-raised, to inspire us with hope and courage, on public platforms and before the microphone. I often feel that, if that legion were more carefully selected, we should have less cause to say that promises are pie-crust. But let us remember that war is a chancy business of ups and downs, and that in the dark days we *did* derive some comfort from those prophecies and promises which, now pie-crust, were appetising fare last winter.

Waiting for News.—

As for waiting for news. Last week was a peculiarly trying example of what that experience may mean. Two vital battles were being fought. The running fight from Greenland at sea and the critical battle for Crete. For my argument, it is immaterial whether in the end both would have to be chalked up as new Nazi successes. Impatient criticism of the naval battle, in the long absence of any news following our admission of the loss of the *Hood*, centred on "that fatal British habit of admitting a defeat before it is necessary," a defeat which no later facts can ever afterwards turn into a victory in history. "Jutland over again," said these critics. "Even the Germans didn't *know* it was the *Hood* they had sunk. Why then announce her loss, while the battle was still in progress and we had no *quid pro quo* to balance her loss? Of course, it was fear of our Democracy. Fear of criticism that our people had heard of *Hood's* loss from Germany." Let us be just. That criticism hits both ways. We grouse at news and we grouse at no news. The long silence following the loss of the *Hood*, grievous as it was, was (apart from strategic necessity) an implementation of our criticism of the early announcement of the *Hood's* loss. We can't have it both ways. The news from Crete was not less sparse and slow to trickle in. But what would you? Put yourself in General Freyberg's place. The battle in Crete was fought twenty-four hours a day in a dense fog of uncertainty. I doubt if the G.O.C. had two hours' sleep in every forty-eight hours. I doubt if he could safely say that the position was clear enough at any hour to justify a report of the situation in any acre on which German forces stood or had stood. For Nazis were falling like rain every hour of daylight, and landing after dark. Good news is delightful. We can't have too much of it. Bad news is beastly. We don't like to hear it. No news is far behind good news, but, still, it is some way above bad news, and should evoke neither criticism nor despair. Let us keep our sense of proportion, with our sense of justice and our patience. Both battles were important battles, but neither of them could win or lose the war. It is a long trick, this ultimate victory, and we have need of all our stocks of patience and restraint.

"Hood" and "Bismarck"

—Postscript.—The story of the Navy's relentless vengeance on the destroyer of the *Hood* is "ancient history now." What a phrase to apply to *any* famous naval engagement! (The story of Grenville and the *Revenge* is always fresh, whenever it is told or read.) I merely mean that the public has absorbed all the main details which are likely to come out until this war's history is written. Thank God for that news. The chief glory of this naval occasion clearly goes to the Fleet Air Arm. Once her steering gear was crippled, the *Bismarck's* end was certain, and merely a grim and necessary duty. The cruiser *Norfolk* shadowed the doomed battleship throughout the long chase. It seems that the Admiralty's faith in the Navy was justified. It seems that the authorities were not so culpable as some impatient critics declared. The Navy produced the *quid pro quo* in its own good time, and so turned a defeat into a victory, without withholding news of the initial disaster for a single hour. And once more the Nazis halloa-ed too soon. The *Bismarck* was unsinkable. The *Bismarck* is sunk. Nazi Germany is unbeatable. Hitler may prove another *Bismarck*. Four years is a long time to wait. But then, so are four days. Trust the British Navy, and, I think, trust the English-Speaking Democracies, which have plenty of shots in their lockers. War is a game of ups and downs, peaks and acute depressions—ding-dong until the long trick's over.

THE OLD STAGER

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A FOUR-HEADED LINE-UP in the MEDITERRANEAN

An Outline of Nazi Strategy, in which France is Now Actively Co-operating, in the Great Inland Sea: Hitler, Mussolini, Darlan and Franco Are All Implicated in the Great Strategic Plot to Oust British Influence and to Control the Whole North African Coastline

Described by
FERDINAND TUOHY

FOUR dictatorships of very varying strength and prestige wish to engineer the last of Britain in the Mediterranean. No matter where the band may strike up—in Eire or Iraq, the Shetlands or Chad (just a cross-section) this four-headed will to push us out of the Middle Sea forms a chapter on its own. It is the one firm meeting-point of Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and Darlan. Under the "Nordic" charioteer, the three Latins are ready to contribute their portions, which need not all be of the direct war-waging kind.

The only one who might still be able to pull back, if he wanted to, is Franco. One or other of two occurrences might be calculated to make him shrink from enacting his allotted role of gate-opener to Hitler. These are: a stemming of Hitler in the Eastern Mediterranean, and a personal appearance by Uncle Sam on the African coast—a naval courtesy visit might suffice.

Meanwhile, the Spanish Caudillo has done nothing to stimulate hope that he will withstand the Nazi programme. He may have introduced one or two traditionalists into his Government, but he has fortified his brother-in-law, Suner, together with the Falange Party. In Suner we see a highly useful type for this cock-eyed interlude: the burning servitor of religion-destroying Nazidom who, as devout Catholic (or so it is billed), can negotiate for a Concordat; the effect of Suner treating with the Pope being to soothe influential Spaniards who would otherwise remain opposed to Spain tying herself to a violently pagan regime.

Impatient to cash in on his victory in the Civil War, which he holds was the first Axis victory of the present conflict, Franco is offered plums at the expense of Britain—and of France. Spain shall get back Gibraltar after 250 years. This is more a matter of pride and prestige than of material worth. And she shall have a juicy chunk of French Morocco. This, of course, is a rich prize in itself, but it goes farther. A so aggrandised Spain strongly if intermittently sited down the coast of Africa as far south as Fernando Po, could look for collaboration from a largely Spanish-origined South America, and if this came, the Madrid regime could not be other than consolidated.

What has Franco got to do to get his grapes from ward-visitor Hitler, whose co-dictators (or their countries) are varyingly sick? He must allow the Nazis to get at the Strait of Gibraltar the way they wish to. He must risk blockade and possibly even bombing by Britain for so doing. He must maintain a concentration in Morocco, ready to tackle any British military reaction, and, much less likely, French resistance.

The French idea of a Mediterranean *sans Angleterre* is nothing new. I heard it repeatedly from French Fascists when these were hating us most at the time of Sanctions. We had too much of the world, in their estimate, and were lazily selfish. Moreover, this was a Latin sea. But that French idea was based on the assumption that Hitler would be fully occupied elsewhere and that France, Italy, and Spain could re-share the Middle Sea and its littorals. There would be a move-over between the three, in regard to territory. Notably, in return for an accommodation of Spain in Morocco, France would have a say in Egypt with Italy, which latter would also get the Eastern Mediterranean.

One need be no seer to express the view that a kindred move-over idea at our expense is at the bottom of Darlan's unspoken Mediterranean hopes to-day. By conspicuously aiding Hitler to erect his New Order, by building, supplying, and facilitating for the Führer, Darlan hopes to earn for France the right to stay on in Africa in a diminished but still big way. This would be realised by the exit of Britain from the Mediterranean—a departure that would liberate territory for taking over by acquisitive ones who would otherwise make a meal off French Africa.

Darlan doesn't now see himself having to give much to Mussolini. Maybe Corsica as a sop. But neither Nice nor Tunis. As for Jibuti, that would be at the disposal of whoever finished with the major say in Abyssinia. It is foolishness to write (in exalted columns, too) that Darlan is just an ambitious, perverted one, with no policy. Of course he has a policy. If he hasn't shouted about it, that 's because it reeks of betrayal, and he knows it.

At the core of Darlan's policy is the Mediterranean, or, if you will, Africa. By making way in certain quarters—in Morocco for Spain, in Syria for Germany, and again for Germany by quitting the Mandated Cameroons—Darlan aspires to retain all of Algeria, a token slice of Morocco, and more than a token slice of Tunis. Nor is this the end of his hopes if, as I imagine, he is being guided by the *mise-en-valeur* plan publicised by Caillaux. This hinges on the sending of builders and tools to potentially rich latitudes *before* sending settlers. The Niger Valley, and Chad, figure largely; also Dakar. The building of a Trans-Saharan railway from Marrekech to Dakar is part of this *mise-en-valeur* plan, and we learn that France and Germany have already got together on it.

Put roundly, Darlan hopes to work in with Germany on a joint exploitation of much territory that has been unreservedly French until now, including Equatorial and West Africa and adjoining territories, "featuring" the above rich regions. Conceivably, he might do a spot of fashionable "leasing" in regard to Dakar; or else the Condominium principle could be called in to cover the passing of French sovereignty in various latitudes.

"The English always said they wanted nothing better than that the old Franco-German quarrel should be composed, that no peace could come to Europe until it was. Very well, now we 're composing it!" Can't you hear Laval chortling over that? Laval is Darlan's political brain. Yet I doubt if the Admiral, outraged by Oran though he still may be, goes the whole hog for the suppression of Britain, as does a Laval, who fears that Britain, retaining honour if not even a shirt, might live to cut out France with a victorious Germany. It is quite possible that Darlan would prefer a negotiated peace, for its leaving him less completely at the mercy of Hitler. Yet a corner-stone of this peace would have to be our deletion from the Mediterranean basin. Otherwise Darlan's whole scheme wouldn't work.

Next we come to the fellow who did all the shouting in the first place, to provoke a Mediterranean issue.

Mussolini's surviving usefulness to a once-junior partner lies in the offering he can make to Hitler of strategic territory, such as Sicily, Cyrenaica, the Dodecanese, together with Italian communications appertaining thereto; and in what fighting worth remains to be extracted from a Navy whose mission was primarily that of tying down our naval forces so that these could not leave to operate elsewhere. If Hitler should ever win, Mussolini will be rewarded for such services, though hardly in *Mare Nostrum*. For example, Mussolini has about as much chance as a salmon stands in the Sahara of realising that once lovely pipe-dream of a Fascist Egypt and Suez. He will not rule in Tunis, either. Gone, too, that other dream of cleaving from Tripoli to Chad, and onwards to Duala facing over to South America. And evaporated his hope of being the dominant one at the Gibraltar entrance.

By keeping well to heel, Mussolini can nurse the expectation of being permitted to share in the exploitation of Africa alongside a Darlan and a Franco. That will bring wealth and prestige yet, he reckons. But he must realise only too well that Hitler's gift of additional Italian sovereignty is likely to be restricted to the shores of the Adriatic—a process that has already begun with the rearing of an Italian King of Croatia.

In this vision held by four dictators, of a Mediterranean swept clear of British influence, Hitler emerges as the undisputed boss. The three Latins would have replaced one "Nordic" by a second.

No close analysis is required to convey what Hitler hopes to get by Britain's deletion. While his very own German sphere of possession could well lie east of a line drawn through Crete to Western Egypt, he would reach out, as master, to all decisive or valuable points: to Tunis, to Chad and Duala, to Tangier, to Casablanca, to Dakar. What he ordained in relation to such places would be the law. By many a skilful touch would his African *Lebensraum* be rendered a paying reality for the Third Reich.

Let the other three keep their national flags here and there. "*Macht nichts!*" He'd have his hands on the controls all right! And if he really wanted any place—why, he'd wangle it or take it. That 's why I imagine Franco might be taking a big risk in believing he would ever enter into effective ownership of what has been promised him in French Morocco. The Germans have wanted Morocco for fifty years, and their present infiltration suggests they hope at the least to endure around hub regions like Casablanca. Aside from Morocco's lure, a German footing there is indicated, as link with Dakar.

In respect of the capital of Senegal, the ground is obviously being cleared for an amphibious (air-cum-naval) base or stronghold built on lines which the immediate future patently holds in store. And much the same goes for Tangier: the Nazis consider they are there for keeps, too. The German record also strongly suggests that the Panzer and *Luftwaffe* descent upon Tripoli foreshadows a Nazi permanence somewhere in the crucial region of the Sicilian bottle-neck. Another amphibious settlement in Tunis, maybe, by arrangement with Darlan?

A new feature is that the Nazis are already supervising the organisation of Mediterranean and African *Lebensraum* while the war is yet undecided, the idea evidently being to have as much as possible "in the bag" in case a peace has to be negotiated.

The Mediterranean challenge of the Four menaces the English-speaking world, not alone Britain. For, if we regard Gibraltar-Malta-Alexandria-Haifa as a rampart protecting possessions on the further side, the United States regard an overflow of dictatorship to the West African coast, such as would result from Britain's expulsion from the Mediterranean, as a menace to *their* rampart of the South Atlantic.

THE CONTROLLER OF FRANCE'S NORTH AFRICAN EMPIRE: GENERAL MAXIME WEYGAND AND HIS WIFE

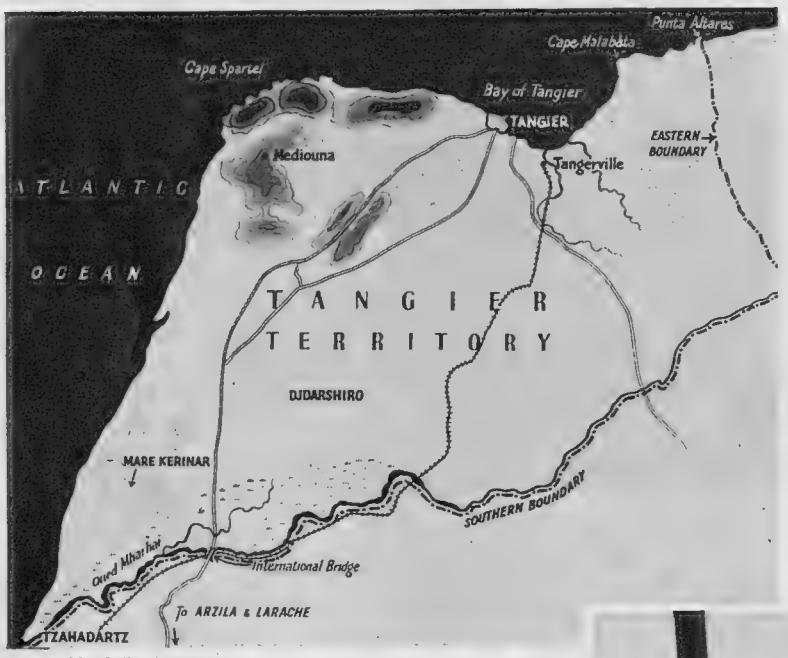
After Marshal Pétain himself, Weygand is France's best-known and best-publicised soldier. He is now seventy-four years of age, having been born in Brussels in 1867; during the last war he was Chief of Staff to General Foch, when his reputation as a military strategist was established. Later, in 1920, he effected a spectacular reorganisation of the Polish Forces defending Warsaw against the Russians, and turned defeat into victory. When the break-through of the Germans took place in France in 1940 he was recalled from Syria to take over command of the French Army in place of Gamelin. Although it was fully expected that he would stem the German onrush, he was unable to accomplish this task; and after the French collapse, he accepted service under the Vichy Government. He is now in virtual control of France's North African Empire. Little known to the world generally, and rarely photographed, is Madame Weygand. She was formerly Mlle. Renée de Forsanz, and she was married in 1900: there are two sons of the marriage

THE GERMAN PENETRATION OF NORTH AFRICA

The Tragic Story of the Crumbling of an Empire

FRENCH WEST AFRICA, AND THE OVERLAND APPROACHES TO DAKAR: To the eastward lies Tunisia, still under French control, although in no position to resist German penetration, which is actively progressing: from here, right to the Atlantic coast and down to Dakar, is the region under the general control of Weygand. Apart from Morocco and the coastal regions, this is an area of deserts—but it has one virtue in German eyes: it leads down to Dakar, the French naval base, whence attacks on British shipping and on America could be carried out. The Spanish region of Tangiers is shown in detail below

THE TWO CUSTODIANS OF FRANCE'S AFRICAN EMPIRE: General Weygand with Admiral Jean Esteva: the latter is the "Resident-General of France in Tunis," appointed by Vichy to guard their interests and to co-operate and collaborate with the Germans in North Africa



THE TANGIER TERRITORY, WHICH SPAIN HAS NOW OCCUPIED: This region which (with Gibraltar on the opposite shore) commands the entry to the Mediterranean was formerly a neutral zone with an internationalised port. It is now virtually Spanish territory, having been taken over despite protests from Great Britain and other Powers. Like Tunisia, this territory is now under German domination

THE eleven months which have elapsed since the capitulation of France to the power of Germany have been uneasy ones for the French Empire in North Africa. Though stunned for the moment at the news of the surrender of France, the Empire soon roused itself to assume readiness to continue the struggle, relying upon the spirit of their fine army, some 600,000, and the support of the unconquered French Navy. The Governor of Tunis, M. Peyrouton, at once broadcast that the Empire "stands in an attitude of resistance, full of courage," while General Noguès, Commander-in-Chief of the whole military forces of North Africa, announced that not an inch of French territory would be given up to Italy. But though this devotion and loyalty to France in her hour of sore despair was doubtless appreciated, the new self-appointed rulers of France found the language too strong and independent in their strange mood of humble submission to Germany.

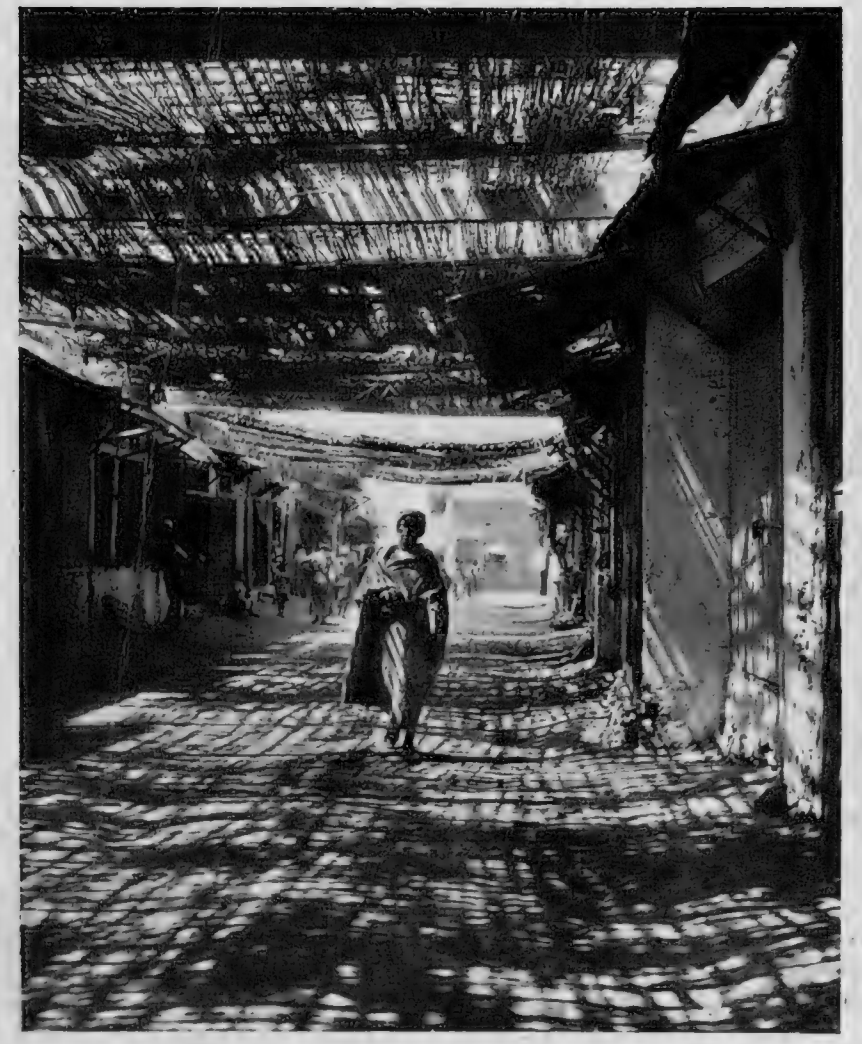
General Noguès was informed that his sole duty was to maintain strict discipline among the troops and confidence in the Government. The Moroccan troops, who had assembled full of enthusiasm, were disbanded, retiring to their homes not understanding what had happened, and gradually there spread all over the North African territories a sapping of confidence and will to victory. Orders from Vichy spoke more and more of co-operation with the New Order of their conquerors, and of the necessity of complete submission to the dictates of Marshal Pétain.

By the terms of the Armistice, a zone along the frontier in Tunis was to be demilitarised and all fixed armaments were to be rendered useless, while the naval bases of Bizerta and Oran were to lose all their defensive power. The Italian Armistice Commission arrived, and swaggered for a time, enjoying the sensation of complete power, which they complained was not fully understood by the authorities and people of Tunis, who "seem to have forgotten their defeat and that all decisions are to be made only by the victors." They had great schemes for Tunis, which they wished to restore to independence under the Bey of Tunis, with a treaty of alliance which would give Italy control of the harbours, and the right to maintain a garrison after the manner of the British in Egypt. But their arrogance was noticeably reduced as the British Army swept back the Italian forces in Libya, and by March they were no longer to be seen in uniform marching about the streets, but preferred civilian clothes and the seclusion of their own headquarters.

General Weygand arrived in Algiers last October on a special mission, as the Viceroy of Marshal Pétain, having supreme authority to preserve military and political security. One of his chief objects was to check any sympathy for De Gaulle and his Free French Forces, and to urge complete loyalty to the Vichy Government. For some months he was vigorously

FRANCE'S EVIL GENIUS: The anti-British Admiral Darlan, who threatens to attack everyone who touches the French Empire—with the exception of Germany!

A VIEW OF THE CITY OF TANGIER, taken from a Moorish café where mint tea is drunk and hashish smoked before the afternoon siesta: Situated within the Spanish zone in Morocco, Tangier was internationalised by agreements signed in 1923 and 1925 by Britain, France and Spain, when its permanent neutrality was declared. Later Spain asked for full control, and in 1928 was given the policing of the zone, although the government remained international. Spanish troops occupied Tangier in June 1940, when Britain's hands were full elsewhere. In the past Spain was wont to state that she had no aspirations towards Tangier; but apparently the Axis have made her think differently!



"THE NATIONAL PORT OF MOROCCO"—A STREET SCENE IN CASABLANCA: It is to Marshal Lyautey, the great French Colonial administrator, that credit for the creation of Casablanca as the "national port" of Morocco is due. Extensive harbour works were begun there in the year 1913. It is now the largest European and native city in Morocco

THE NORTHERN CAPITAL OF FRENCH MOROCCO, FEZ: On the road south, through Morocco to Dakar, comes the important town of Fez—between the two ports of Rabat on the Atlantic and Oran on the Mediterranean, to both of which it is connected by rail. It is one of the sacred cities of Islam and a keypoint in North-West Africa

reviewing troops, visiting every part of North Africa from Morocco to Tunis, and carrying out his mission with so much pageantry that the Italians became worried. The confident assurance of the Governors that France did not intend yielding one inch of her Empire did not correspond with their ideas of their rights under the Armistice. These reviews were conducted with all the splendour of Imperial France, with Berber chiefs and their tribesmen and the most famous of the Colonial regiments parading before the General, who still held the glamour of a great reputation. It was said that Marshal Pétain had delivered sealed orders to Weygand, which would be put into operation if Hitler was too pressing in his demands, and the Marshal certainly threatened that rather than yield Bizerta and Tunis, and allow German troops through unoccupied France, he would order the French Fleet and Empire to re-enter the war at the side of the British.

In French Morocco General Noguès, who was Resident Governor there, as well as Commander-in-Chief, was busy throughout last autumn and winter in maintaining the discipline of the Army and arranging for various improvements in agricultural production. There was some anxiety about the Air Force, which was not happy under the Vichy orders; many were slipping over to Gibraltar, anxious to join De Gaulle. Regulations were made that pilots should only get petrol to allow them an hour's flying. The natives were remaining remarkably loyal and all seemed going fairly well till Germans began to appear in February, only in small numbers at first, but gradually increasing in volume. It was strange that the Vichy Government allowed this infiltration, as the Nazis had no legal standing there. Only Italy has rights over North Africa under the Armistice terms. But Hitler manages to overlook Italy in his conversations with Vichy, promising to reduce Italian claims if France collaborates cordially enough in the New Order. By the beginning of March there were about a hundred German officials in Morocco prepared to manage the whole affairs of the French Protectorate.

ON THE SOUTHWARD ROAD TO DAKAR: In the very heart of Algeria is the native city of Timimoun: this lies at the foot of the Grand Erg and on the borders of the Sahara. Its architecture is typically Moroccan and early Beau-Geste

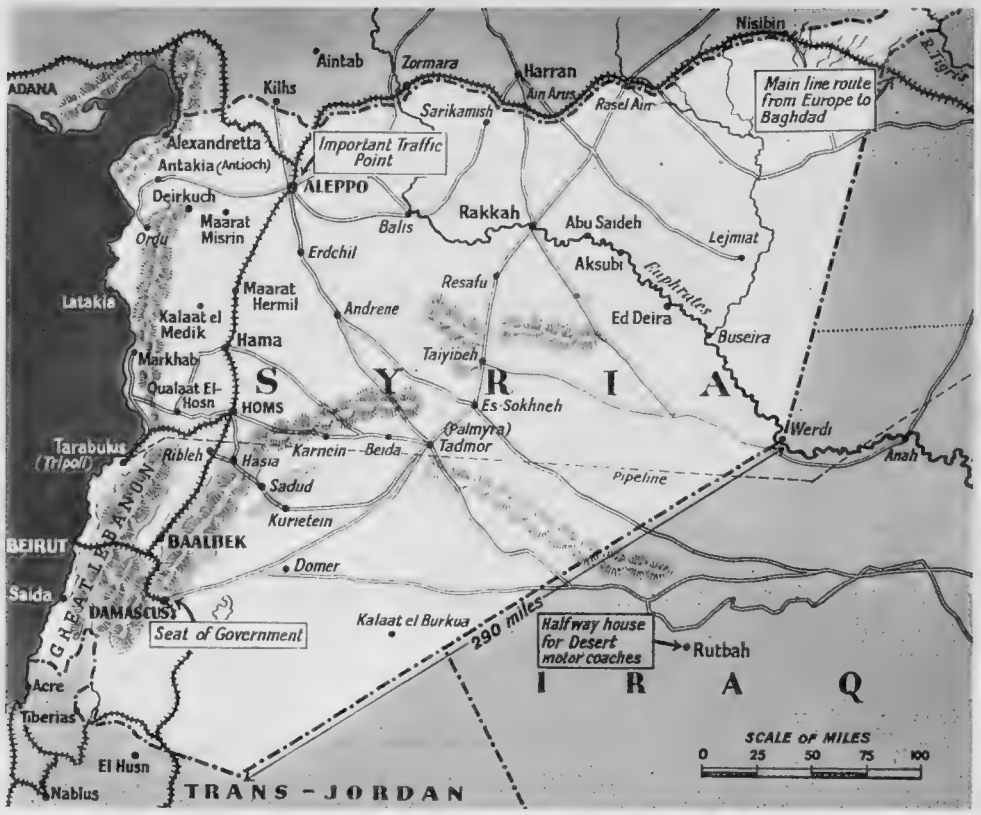
A REMINDER OF THE NOT-SO-DISTANT PAST: Until quite recently this is the manner in which French officials used to travel in Morocco—in a screened litter borne by mules. The coming of the motor-car has outmoded this style of travel, although the litter is still used by native notables and their women

A NATIVE RULER IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA: The King of the Mossis, in his capital at Wagadagga: this territory lies in the Dakar hinterland, and supplies a number of soldiers to the French Colonial Armies

Both General Weygand and General Noguès were alarmed at the penetration of the Germans and were prepared to refuse entry. But visas were issued in Paris, and when Weygand made hindrances, the Nazis just reported the matter to Wiesbaden, where the Armistice Commission resides, who spoke to Vichy firmly, with the result that orders were sent to General Weygand to give all facilities to the newly-arriving Germans. It is quite obvious that Hitler is seeking to obtain such a hold upon North Africa that resistance will be out of the question and that Vichy will agree to submarine bases.

In Spanish Morocco the Nazis move freely. They have held out great hopes to Spain, who is promised a general control over the whole of Morocco, which is to be cleared of French authority. Spain would then regain her position as a great Power, of which she has been robbed, according to Nazi propaganda, through the scheming British. As for the Moors, they are being flattered and bribed with promises of full independence. The Germans maintain they have no designs for themselves beyond the holding of some administrative posts, and facilities for increasing their trade.

The French seem to stand by and watch all this being done in a state of helplessness. Their fine army has been reduced to just over 100,000, whereas it was over 600,000 last June. Admiral Darlan and Marshal Pétain, for all their brave speeches, make no obstructions to the increasing penetration of the Nazis, who inspect aerodromes and are getting control over the key points. The French Navy is getting increasingly hostile to the British, and the Oran unhappy incident is never forgotten. Naval authority is in power at Vichy, where Admiral Darlan holds chief control, and he has removed the civilian Governors of Algeria and Tunis, replacing them with Admirals—Admiral Esteva is Governor of Tunis, and Admiral Abrial, the "Dunkirk hero," has been made Governor of Algeria. The Germans are hoping to excite the passions of Spain and of the Moors sufficiently to induce them to join with them in driving out the French from Morocco and then to make an assault upon Dakar. Fortunately, the United States are not unobservant of these activities and are well aware of the danger of allowing Dakar to fall under German influence.



WHERE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SUBORDINATED TO GERMAN NEEDS : Nominally, Syria is still under French rule ; actually it is to-day governed by the Germans, who are using it for a jumping-off place to attack British forces in Iraq, to help in the encirclement of Turkey, and to further their tortuous aims in the Middle East generally. At various points—notably Palmyra, Rayak, Damascus and Aleppo—the R.A.F. have already begun bombing operations against German occupied aerodromes

THE COASTLINE OF SYRIA HAS BEEN MINED BY THE ROYAL NAVY: To hinder the movement of enemy ships attempting to pass through to Syria, the Navy have mined the area indicated above : this includes the island of Cyprus which, so it is stated, is another German objective in the Eastern Mediterranean

GERMAN PRESSURE ON A DISTRACTED SYRIA

To the Confused Internal Conditions in this Area is Now Added the Menace of the German War Machine

FRENCHMEN IN SYRIA ARE RESPONDING TO GENERAL DE GAULLE : Behind General de Gaulle is his equally distinguished associate, General Catroux (Leader of the Free French Forces in the Near East). Their cause is being espoused by numbers of French officers who have escaped from Syria and who have hitherto been loyal to Vichy. They cannot concur in the overrunning of Syria by the Germans

AT the present moment, Syria seems likely to become a battleground between the Axis Powers and the British Allies, with the Syrians, who are much divided in their sympathies, as spectators. A large proportion of the Syrian Arabs are keen upon obtaining independence ; some have been won over by Nazi propaganda and a promise of the longed-for independence under German protection ; others, particularly in the Lebanon, desire a British victory, relying upon the known fairness of Britain to the Arabs.

France, the mandatory Power, appears to be relinquishing authority to the Axis Powers, acquiescing in all demands, meekly allowing the Germans to occupy the leading airfields, from which they can attack the one-time Allies of France.

Ever since the beginning of this year, there have been reports coming in from Syria of sporadic riots in various places, strikes and demonstrations demanding independence from the mandatory Power. Syria has always been restive under French rule, which was thrust upon her by the Great Powers in 1920, for if she could not have independence, she would have preferred the suzerainty of Britain, whose military power had crushed the Turks. But there was little active disturbance or serious trouble till the fall of France last June, when the Syrians found that the Power placed over them had been overwhelmingly defeated.

When the first news of the capitulation of France arrived in Syria, there was an immediate desire to continue fighting with the Allies, but the authorities were persuaded to be "loyal" to Marshal Pétain. This decision would appear to have been a grave mistake, for had Syria declared for Free France, she was in a good position to have maintained full authority, having a fine army, a great mass of war material, and the assistance of strong British forces in Palestine, as well as a friendly alliance with her neighbour, Turkey. Giving way to the protestations of the Vichy Government meant the arrival of arrogant Italian generals, forming an Armistice Commission, with preposterous demands for the demobilisation of the French Army, the handing over of air-bases and all the best and most modern aircraft. All the German and Italian firms who had either left or been expelled began to return, and the Italian Commission insisted on indemnities being paid to them for losses incurred.

Italy complained to Vichy France that obstructions were being placed in their way in Syria, and that M. Puaux was not helpful. It was decided to supersede him, and M. Chiappe was appointed to take his place, with full powers to satisfy the Italians. He never arrived in Syria, as the plane in which he was travelling was shot down.

It could not be disguised from the Syrians that France in Syria lay at the mercy of her conquerors, even though they despised the Italians and hated the Germans. In consequence, the pan-Arab movement began to rise again, helped by Axis propaganda trying to stir up trouble for Britain. The populace grew more and more irritated, especially when the news, even in the Axis-controlled newspapers, had to admit the Greek successes against Italy. When this was followed by the sweeping British victories in Libya, the

SYRIA HAS MANY LINKS WITH ENGLAND AND THE CRUSADERS : This is the Qualaat-el-Hosn, one of the best-preserved Crusaders' castles in all Syria. It was at this place that Richard Cœur-de-Lion made his last stand against the Infidels during the Crusades

THE NOMAD LIFE OF THE SYRIAN ARABS : The great annual migration of one of the Arab tribes northwards over the desert to seek pasturage for their camels and herds on the more fertile borders of Syria

THE QUAINT ASPECT OF A SYRIAN VILLAGE : Near the town of Homs in Central Syria is this quaint village : from afar off the native houses resemble a series of sugar-loaves : it will be noted that the village still possesses a wall of fortifications

Syrians grew more indignant at the presence of the Italians, particularly when the astounding number of prisoners was made known.

The importance of Syria to Hitler is quite obvious—it is the stepping-place to the next goal—the Suez Canal and Egypt. Support for the Iraqi usurper, Rashid Ali, was willingly promised, for that cut the British oil supplies from Mosul, but up to the present only a small number of Nazi planes have passed into Iraq, where the rising took place before plans were sufficiently advanced. It was hoped that there would be a general Arab rising against the British, but as that has not taken place, the Germans may possibly drop Iraq and just develop their power over Syria. There are reports that transport is being collected in the Ægean ports, Bulgarian and Rumanian ships passing through the Bosphorus. At least three airfields are in German occupation—Aleppo, Palmyra and Damascus.

While all this is taking place, the French authorities are withdrawing more and more, making no move to hinder the arrival of the Germans, whom they really ought to intern. The first arrivals of Nazi planes were described as forced landings, but the latest from Vichy is that the Germans are not overstepping the Armistice terms, which stated that all "aerodrome and installations in unoccupied territory will be subjected to German and Italian supervision." This obviously referred to France, but is now being stretched to cover Syria. General Dentz is now becoming truculent, not to the invading Germans, but to the British, and what he calls their "criminal aggressions."

It is said that General Dentz had cabled to Vichy to learn how he should treat any German planes which might land, as he was rather afraid of the attitude of the French troops. But Admiral Darlan had by this time been to Berchtesgaden and given way on all points immediately required by Hitler, and so Dentz was informed that the German landings were consistent with the Armistice, and did not constitute any infringement of the rights of France. Mr. Eden, in the House of Commons, specifically denied this, saying that the French Government cannot escape responsibility for allowing German aircraft to use Syrian aerodromes.

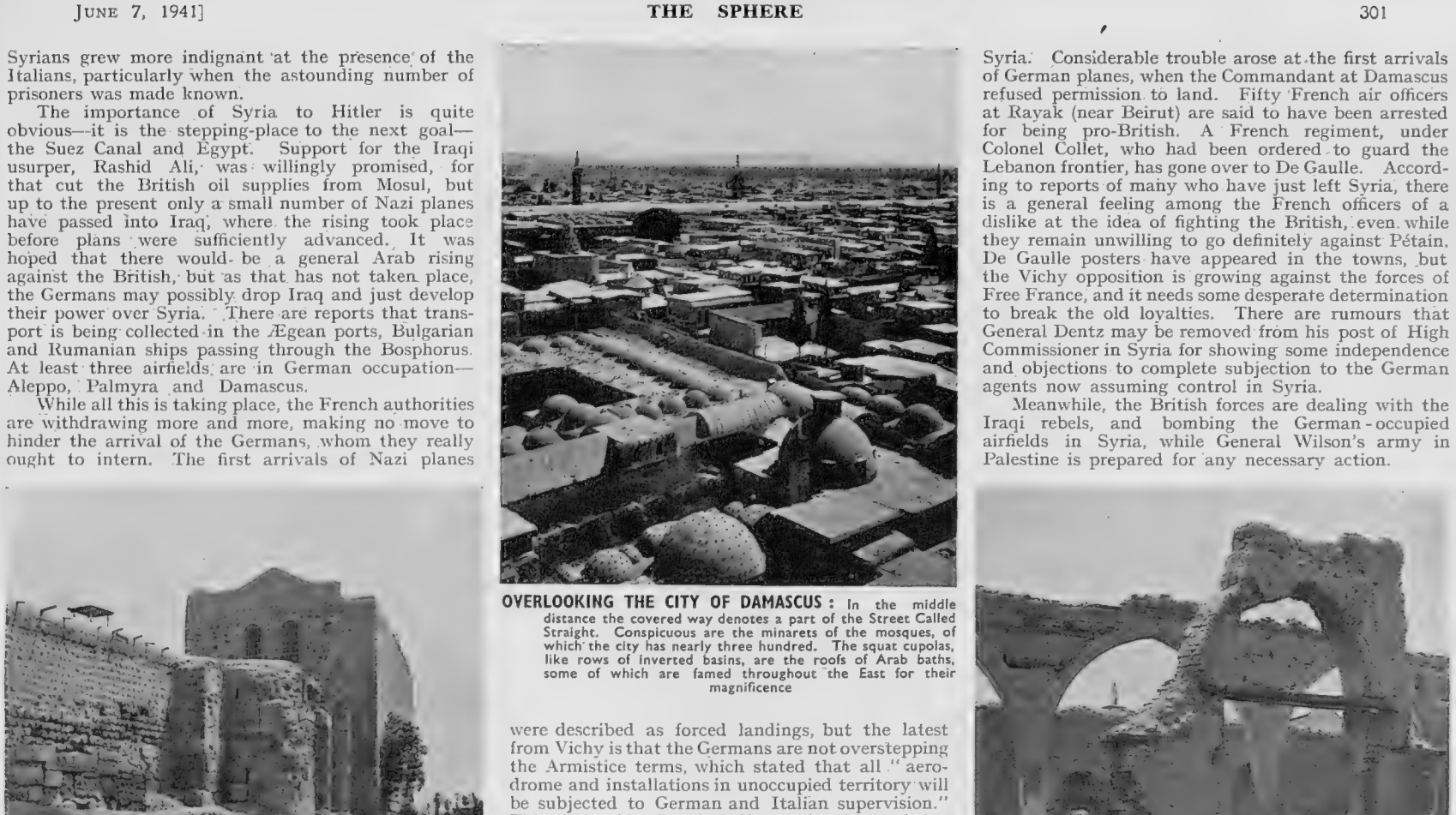
There is some anxiety felt by the Vichy Government concerning the morale of the French Army in Syria. Considerable trouble arose at the first arrivals of German planes, when the Commandant at Damascus refused permission to land. Fifty French air officers at Rayak (near Beirut) are said to have been arrested for being pro-British. A French regiment, under Colonel Collet, who had been ordered to guard the Lebanon frontier, has gone over to De Gaulle. According to reports of many who have just left Syria, there is a general feeling among the French officers of a dislike at the idea of fighting the British, even while they remain unwilling to go definitely against Pétain. De Gaulle posters have appeared in the towns, but the Vichy opposition is growing against the forces of Free France, and it needs some desperate determination to break the old loyalties. There are rumours that General Dentz may be removed from his post of High Commissioner in Syria for showing some independence and objections to complete subjection to the German agents now assuming control in Syria.

Meanwhile, the British forces are dealing with the Iraqi rebels, and bombing the German-occupied airfields in Syria, while General Wilson's army in Palestine is prepared for any necessary action.

OVERLOOKING THE CITY OF DAMASCUS: In the middle distance the covered way denotes a part of the Street Called Straight. Conspicuous are the minarets of the mosques, of which the city has nearly three hundred. The squat cupolas, like rows of inverted basins, are the roofs of Arab baths, some of which are famed throughout the East for their magnificence

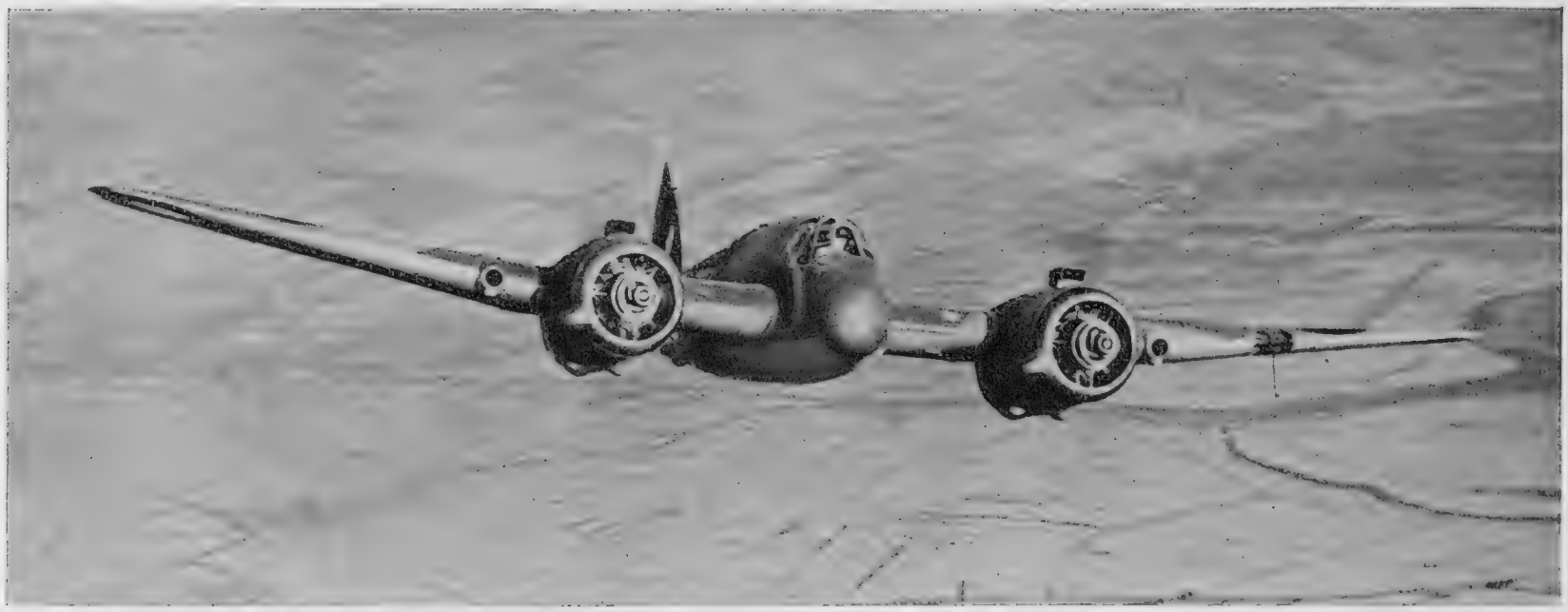
WHERE ST. PAUL WAS LET DOWN IN A BASKET: A section of the ancient wall of Damascus, showing a more recently built-up gateway known as the Bab Kisan. In this restored gateway is pointed out a window (seen in this picture) where St. Paul was let down in a basket by night (Acts ix, 25). Opposite this gate, about 50 paces distant, is the tomb of St. George, the porter who assisted St. Paul in his escape

RUINS OF THE HOUSE OF NAAMAN: Outside the ancient wall of Damascus, near the East Gate, are the remains of an ancient building which, according to an early tradition, was the house of Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings v). The graceful columns and huge arches would indicate that it was originally a great palace. For many years it was the home of lepers, but on the coming of the French they were moved away to a hospital of their own



ALEPPO, THE FAMOUS MART OF THE NEAR-EASTERN WORLD, COMES WITHIN THE WAR ZONE—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The famous city of Aleppo, whose story stretches back into the dim, remote edges of recorded history, came last week within the zone of the war. The whirr of bombing planes sounded over the great walled citadel, as they made for the aerodrome sheltering German planes resting on their way to Iraq. Tradition goes back to the days of Abraham, when the friend of God, departing out of Haran, sat down at Aleppo and milked his cow. The city rose to its greatest wealth and power after the defeat of Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, by the Romans. For long centuries it remained one of the greatest marts of the Near East, occupying a strategic point for the reception and distribution of goods from China and the East. The old caravan routes are still there and in addition it is now linked by rail with the north at Scutari and the south at Damascus, Jerusalem and beyond. It is still a busy, picturesque city, the commercial centre of Syria. The ancient citadel, the walls of which date from the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, looks down on thronged bazaars and a number of mosques, among which that of Zacharias is the most important. The massive entrance to the citadel, with its outer gatehouse and causeway, has appealed to every artist; within, on the enclosed plateau are a variety of ancient remains, including the little mosque of Abraham. The modern additions consist of villas of the well-to-do stretching out among the surrounding palm-belts. Roads lead westward to Antioch and Alexandretta, northwards to Adana and the Turkish frontier, eastwards to Harman and far-distant China. In literature, one reference to the city leaps to the memory. The expiring Othello tells how once in Aleppo when a malignant Turk beat a Venetian and traduced the state he had seized and stabbed "the circumcised dog"



THE BEAUFIGHTER TAKES THE AIR : A fine impression of one of our latest aircraft in actual flight by day. This aeroplane is also capable of adaptation for night interception of enemy bombers

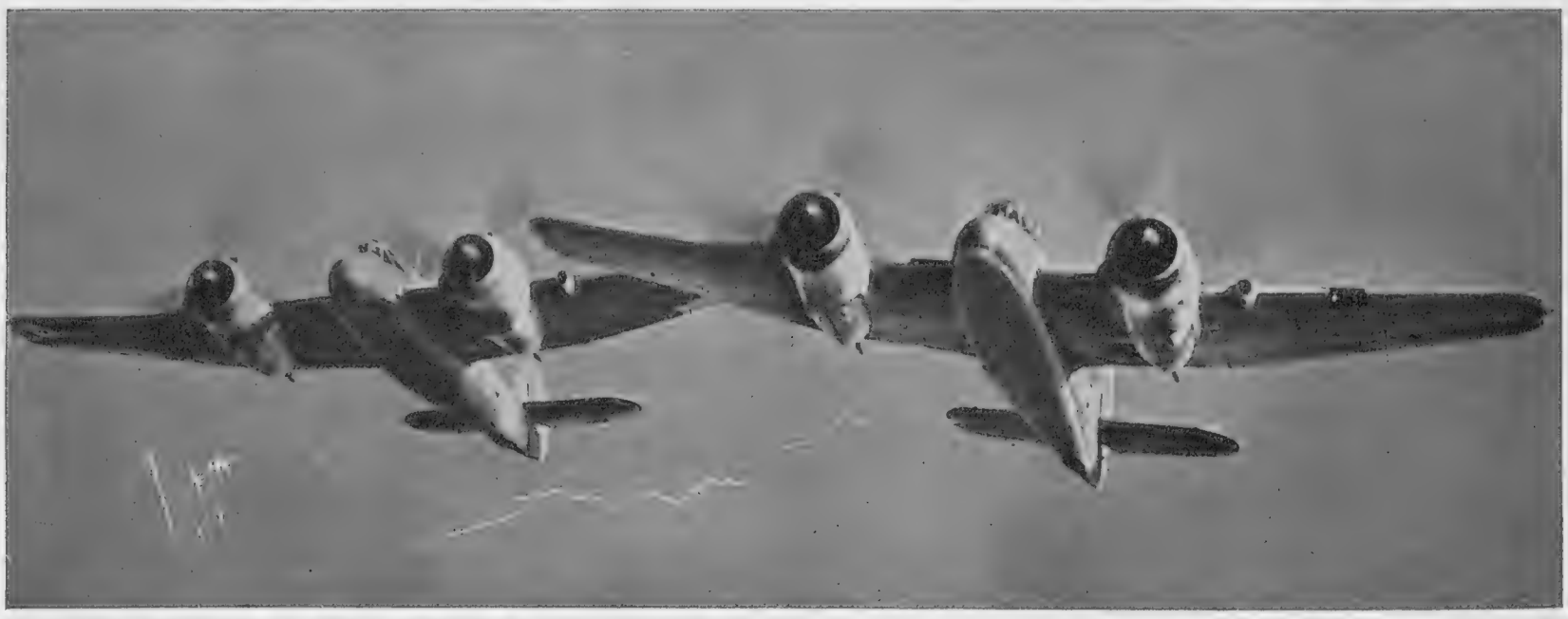
The NEW R.A.F. NIGHT-FIGHTER

First Pictures of the Beaufighter, which is Already Figuring in the News

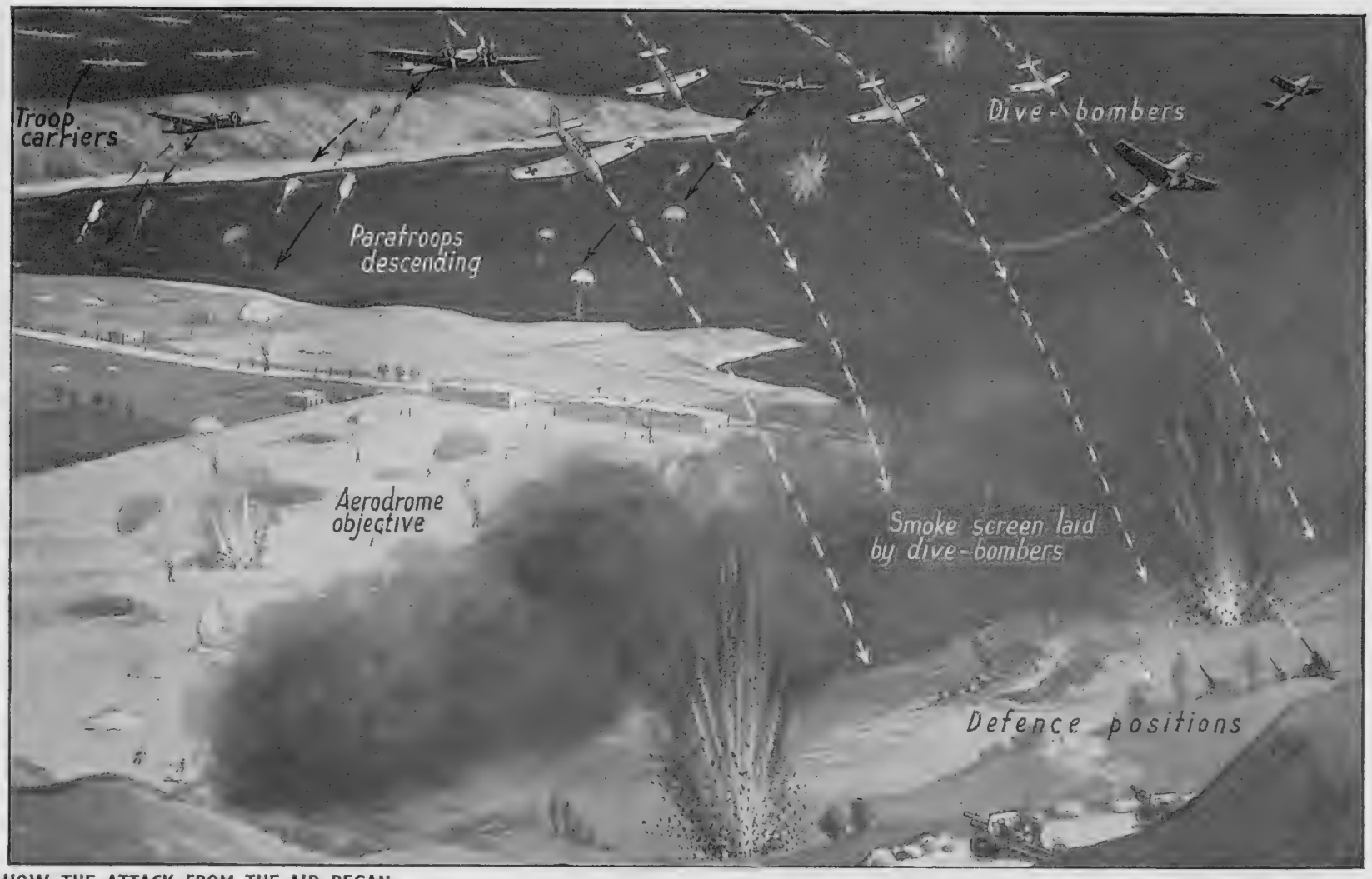
Before the war the Bristol Company had become famous for their fighter and bomber aircraft: one of the standard types which came into service immediately was the Blenheim, both for bombing and fighting purposes. The Beaufort was another of the products of this huge company: so far no details of the performance of this aircraft have been made available for publication. Now comes the Beaufighter, of which these are the first pictures released by the Air Ministry. It is a twin-engined mid-wing monoplane of high speed capabilities: and it is heavily armed for use as a day- or night-"intercepter"—in other words, a fighter aircraft. During coming raids over this country by night, it is more than likely that this aircraft will share with the Havoc the task of bringing down enemy bombers

A PICTURE FOR AIR OBSERVERS : How the Beaufighter appears from the ground, with its two powerful engines projecting well forward, and its well-proportioned fuselage

ON THE GROUND : After the take-off the two wheels retract backwards and disappear from view



TWO BEAUFIGHTERS FLYING IN CLOSE FORMATION—a picture which may help observers on the ground to identify these new aircraft which will, in all probability, be figuring prominently in the news soon



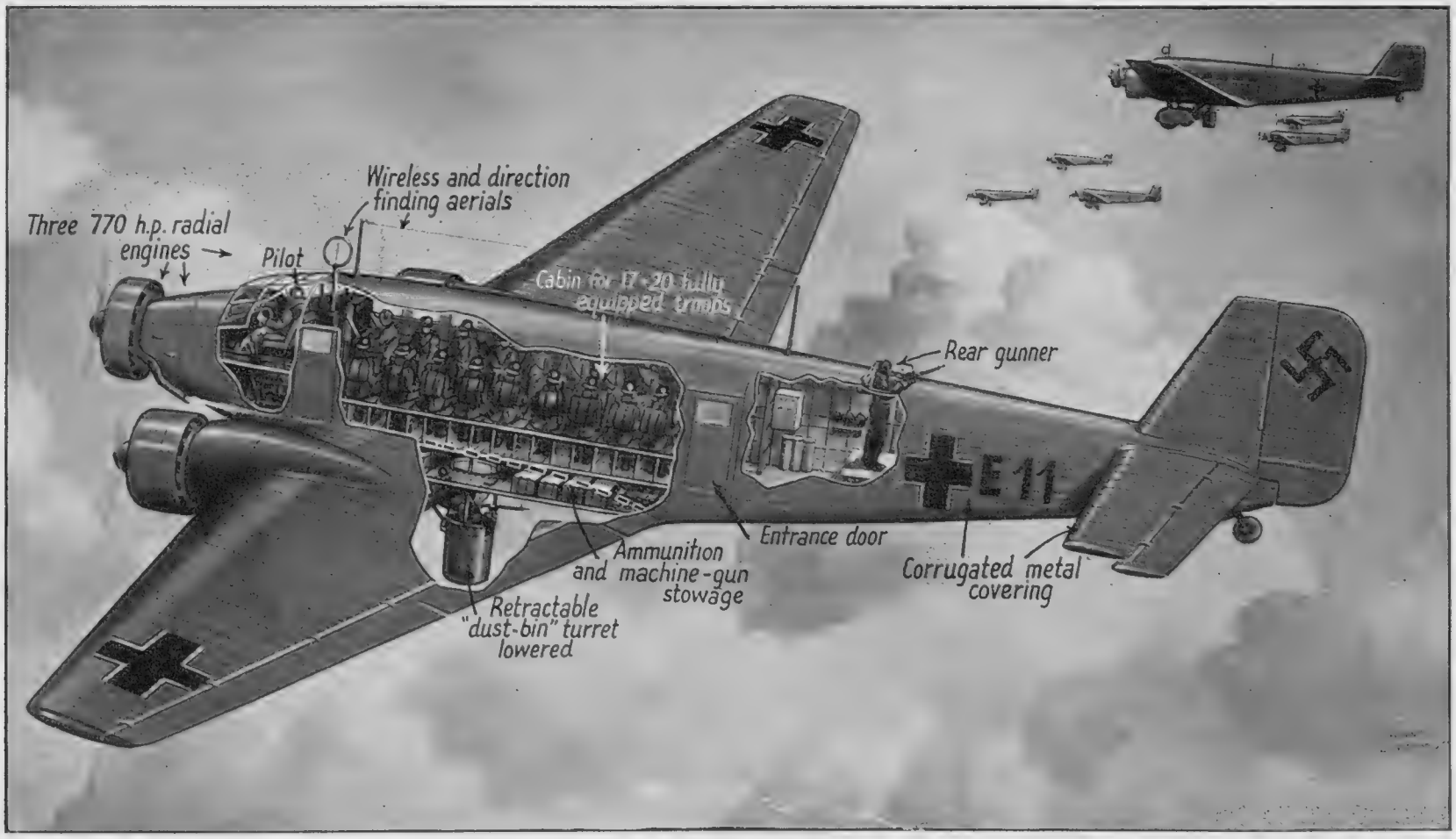
HOW THE ATTACK FROM THE AIR BEGAN: Dive-bombers come over to attack the defenders and to put up a smoke-screen, under cover of which the landings by parachutists on Cretan aerodromes were made—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

THE GERMAN INVASION OF CRETE

How the Attacks from the Air have been Carried Out by Parachutists and Air-borne Troops

—With Special "Sphere" Diagrams and Drawings

We may be sure that the experience gained in the battle for Crete will be well studied by our own military experts. The facts are now revealed fully: and in these pages are illustrated some of the tactics employed by the Germans in their unprecedented assault on the island by means of parachutists and air-borne troops. Maleme had been selected as the principal point of attack because here was situated one of the few landing-fields; and it was essential to the German plan that control of this should be secured. The defence positions were therefore subjected to the most intense and continuous attack by wave after wave of dive-bombers; in addition to bombs, these aircraft laid a smoke-screen, behind which it was hoped that the parachutists and air-borne troops could land. Soon afterwards these men gained control of the landing-field, and then came clouds of troop-carriers, each with its load of fully-armed men. Despite that the aerodrome was covered from the British positions, plane after plane dumped its load of soldiers—twelve troop-carriers each hour coming in to land, dump their human cargo and stores, and then taking off for further loads. Meanwhile, continuous patrols of the Germans swept the area round the airfield to make sure that the defenders did not secure a foothold by counter-attack. Of course, the casualties amongst planes and troops were terrific—but still the Germans came on, regardless of losses



THE JUNKERS JU 52-3m., THE GERMAN AIRCRAFT WHICH WAS USED DURING THE INVASION OF CRETE FOR THE TRANSPORT OF BOTH PARACHUTISTS AND INFANTRY: A diagram which shows the arrangement within the plane—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

This is the aeroplane that has figured so largely in the attack on Crete: it is a three-engined monoplane which was originally designed to carry from fourteen to seventeen passengers. On the short trip from aerodromes in Greece, however, it is likely that it carried from seventeen to twenty men, according to the distance to be traversed and the load of fuel or stores to be carried. Normally, the Ju 52 has a range of 1,000 miles, but its cruising speed is only 175 m.p.h.—an easy prey, therefore, for fighter aircraft had it been possible to operate them from nearby bases. Unfortunately, this was not possible. The number of this type of aircraft in German possession has been estimated at one thousand, of which some 600 have been used for the Cretan invasion. With the short run from the mainland, a "ferry service" was maintained by the enemy, and the machines were loaded to their full capacity. Many of them crashed on landing and many others were shot down by our bombers and fighter-bombers. It will be noticed from Mr. Wood's drawing that there are two positions in the Ju 52 for air-gunners: photographs demonstrating this little-known system of defence have been published in Germany, although the existence of the gun positions is not disclosed in existing books of reference in this country. The gun turret below the aircraft is of the retractable type; it guards the very vulnerable underside of the aeroplane

THE ENEMY'S TACTICS IN THE CRETE INVASION: Preparing for further operations after landing, whilst reconnaissance planes keep in touch with the movements of German troops operating farther afield—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

It has been stated that the German troops landed by aeroplane in Crete carried iron rations in a special, flat, bullet-proof case on their chests, large ammunition supplies, and a Red Cross outfit. They obviously must rely on the country for water; and the local wells thus came in early for their attention. The Germans were only supposed to use their iron rations when the country had ceased to yield food—which would be quite soon in the case of a somewhat primitive island such as Crete! During the day, low-flying planes could drop extra supplies to the troops on the ground if they wanted anything, sending down stores wrapped up in bales designed to withstand the bump of landing. Day-long fighter reconnaissance planes followed the Nazis around, reporting their progress and collecting details which Headquarters could collate into a complete picture of the operations. Probably the whole territory was divided into squares like a football field, and day-long snooping aircraft were sending radio messages or carrying home a full commentary on the progress of the battle

HOW THE FIRST TROOP-CARRYING PLANES LANDED ON THE ROADS OF CRETE, in the fields, and on the beaches, regardless of crashes—until they were able to secure the use of an aerodrome for further landings—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

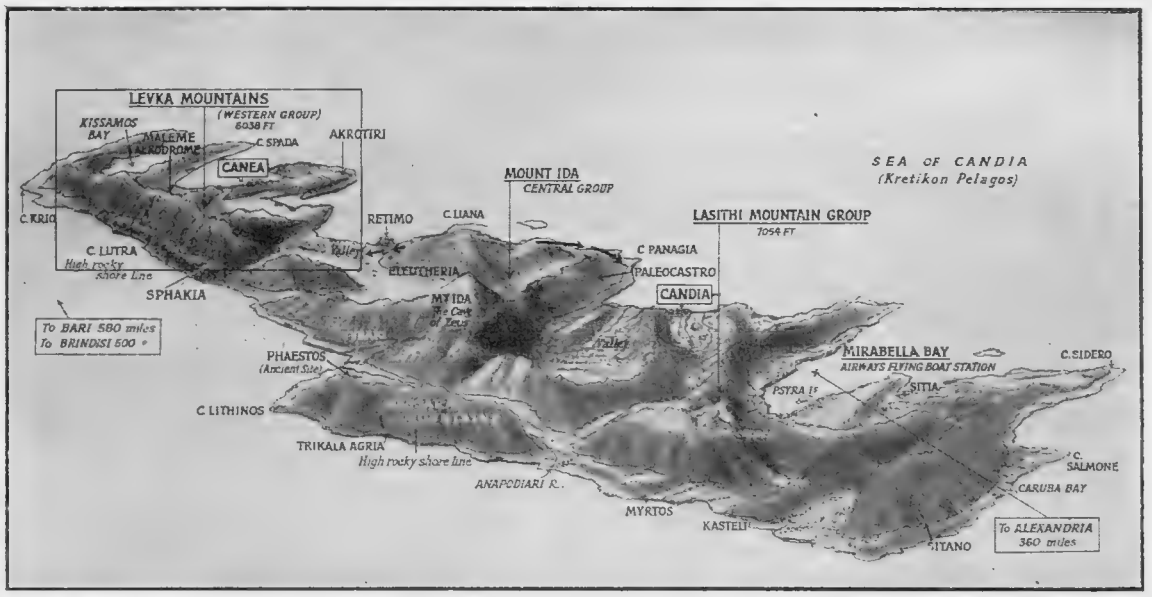
Before the Nazis secured control of the aerodrome at Maleme, the first troop-carrying planes were compelled to make crash landings wherever they could. Some attempted to land on the beaches, in confined fields and even on the roads: hidden dangers on the beaches trapped many of the aircraft; telegraph posts along the roads, and hedges and other obstructions in the fields, also took a heavy toll of the invader. Later, even after Maleme had been captured, the aerodrome was littered with the wreckage of other crashed aircraft

THE ENEMY'S TACTICS: The air-borne troops, after landing, consult their specially prepared maps and then move forward, according to plan, to attack selected objectives on the island—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The first air-borne units were undoubtedly supplied with maps drawn from the results of previous air reconnaissance, and each group of shock troops was assigned a definite task and given a definite objective to secure

The GERMAN INVASION of CRETE *(cont.)*

ONE OF THE PARACHUTE TROOPS: It has been stated that Max Schmeling, one-time heavy-weight boxing champion (who received such a battering at the hands of Joe Louis, the negro), has been killed in Crete. This picture shows him at the beginning of a descent during recent exercises in Germany



THE ISLAND OF CRETE: Showing the area around Maleme and Canea where the severest fighting has taken place, and other important points in the island's topography

On right—**A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PORT OF CANEA:** The main objective of the Germans who landed at near-by Maleme. This is the principal port on the island, and it is also near Suda Bay, the finest anchorage for merchant and naval vessels. A series of determined efforts were made to effect the occupation of this Cretan port and finally our forces were compelled to withdraw to the east. It is reported that Canea hardly exists now, so severe has been the German bombing

THE ALPINE CHARACTER OF THE MOUNTAIN BACKBONE OF CRETE: Crete is essentially a land of mountains, each of the main groups of peaks rising to some 7,000 to 8,000 ft. The hill masses are cut into by precipitous gorges. One climbs through these to the bare masses of limestone rock which form the upper slopes of the mountains, writes Mr. C. P. Baker, who took these two photographs. The above view was taken near the Samaria defile in a line S.W. from Canea

The ESCAPE of the KING of GREECE from CRETE

How He was Succoured in the Hill Country by Devoted Mountaineers

IN THE ASKIFU DEFILE LEADING TO AN UPLAND PLAIN: A distinctive feature of the Cretan landscape is the upland plain. There are several of these: one, the Askifu (or Askipho) plain, is reached through the defile shown above. It lies about midway between Canea and Retimo, and is enclosed within hills which rise about a thousand feet above the plain, which itself stands at 3,000 to 4,000 ft. above sea-level

THE escape of King George of Greece from his residence near Canea makes a stirring narrative. In some of its aspects it recalls passages in Shakespeare, where monarchs have had to flee their palaces and accept the kindly hospitality of peasants or goatherds. The King was in a house commanding a wide view of the countryside, guarded by an escort of Greek gendarmerie and a platoon of New Zealanders. When he was aroused by the roar of a squadron of Messerschmitts, King George, Prince Peter, his cousin, and the Prime Minister came out to watch them. The remainder of the party were in another house in the village.

"There was a great deal of machine-gunning from the planes, and firing by our anti-aircraft and by our troops in all directions. We decided," recounts Colonel J. S. Blunt, Military Attaché in Greece, "that it was no use staying, as our house would obviously be attacked as a useful observation post. With difficulty, owing to the low-flying planes, we collected our party. The whole thing happened so quickly that we could not get transport and took to the hills literally with what we could carry in our hands. Every 5 to 10 yards we had to take cover as hundreds of planes were whizzing about in every direction."

After climbing the ridges they arrived at noon at a cave, occupied by a Cretan shepherd and his family, beside a little spring. They sheltered there until three o'clock, when they continued their journey to Panagya.

From there Colonel Blunt tried to get into touch with Canea. The situation, however, was confused with much fighting and he had to abandon the attempt.

Eventually he succeeded in telephoning to Suda to arrange for the embarkation of the King during Thursday night.

Throughout the three days' ordeal, he said, "the bearing of everybody from his Majesty downwards was all that one could desire. His Majesty treated it like an outing and seemed bored at having to take cover from the planes."

Drawn by Roland Davies

THE ESCAPE OF THE KING OF THE HELLENES FROM CRETE: When towards the middle of last week it became necessary for King George to retire from the proximity of Retimo he had to make a quick decision. There was no waiting for cars or baggage; with an official party, he set out for the mountains to the south, each member carrying his own immediate baggage. To escape from the malignant eyes of enemy reconnaissance machines following his every movement, shelter had to be taken in a shepherd's rock-dwelling in the mountains

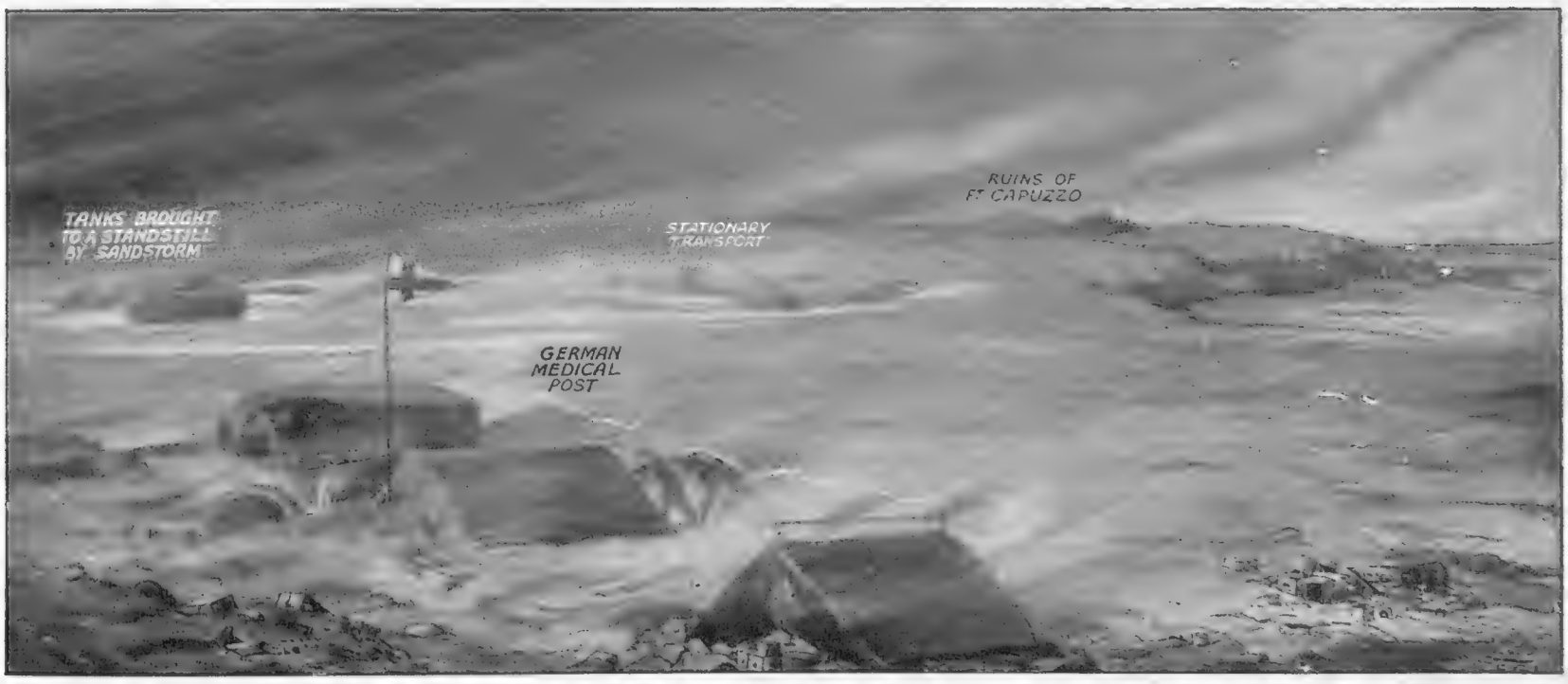
PLANES FROM THE UNITED STATES ARE NOW BEING USED AGAINST THE ENEMY IN LIBYA: A Martin Maryland 167 swoops low to attack enemy positions in the desert—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The WAR at TOBRUK

A Series of Pictures from the British-held Fortress in the Western Desert

For the first time, aircraft manufactured in America have been used as bombers in the North African campaign. It is understood that these are Martin Maryland 167 "attack bombers." These are twin-engined monoplanes with a top speed of 305 m.p.h. (which is quite considerable for bombing operations in the desert) and a range of about 2,470 miles (which, again, is considerable). During recent operations in Libya attacks were launched by these aircraft on German tanks, and mechanised vehicles were dispersed near the old aerodrome at Fort Capuzzo: this is the incident depicted by Mr. Davies in his drawing above. The bomb doors are open in the picture, and bombs are seen bursting near the badly-damaged fort. Along the road are some of the German tanks knocked out during previous attacks. The drawing below shows one of the great difficulties with which both attackers and defenders have to cope. During the present hot season sandstorms are frequent—and these are of a violence and discomfort which are almost unbelievable

On right—**THE OFFICER IN COMMAND:** Brigadier L. J. Morshead, an Australian Brigade Commander, with members of his staff outside Headquarters in Tobruk, where British and Imperial Forces are holding out against German-Italian attacks on the desert fortress



ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF DESERT WARFARE IN LIBYA: A German post on the outskirts of Capuzzo almost overwhelmed by one of the fierce desert sandstorms which frequently hold up all operations during the hot season—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

THE WAR AT TOBRUK—*Official British Pictures*

THE FIRST SIGN TO GREET THE NEWCOMER : A graphic notice on the outskirts of Tobruk which warns incoming troops when an enemy air-raid is in progress. Needless to say, these raids are a very frequent occurrence over the town

DURING AN ENEMY RAID ON THE BRITISH POSITIONS : The crew of an anti-aircraft gun carefully follow the path of a German bomber attacking one of our forward positions. During the day, greatcoats are no longer worn in Tobruk, as this is now the Hot Season—and the heat is *really* great!

AN EPIC OF THE DESERT : Many soldiers of the Western Desert Forces cut off by the Germans have made their way back to Tobruk; most of them with amazing stories of hardships and fortitude. One of the most amazing is that of two Australian engineers, cut off near Benghazi. They made their way for over 300 miles along the enemy's lines of communication, from April 6 to April 22, finally arriving at Tobruk, where they went straight into hospital

A CAPTURED ENEMY TANK, WHICH HAD BEEN KNOCKED OUT BY GUNFIRE : All the reports of the fighting around Tobruk agree as to the great number of casualties caused amongst attacking German tanks: this is only one of a number which were destroyed during the recent attacks launched by the enemy on the perimeter defences

THE PROBLEM OF WATER-SUPPLY IS AN EVER-PRESENT ONE IN THE DESERT : Owing to our firm hold on the harbour at Tobruk, our own water comes largely by sea right up to the defenders, but the enemy's water has to be transported by land over many weary desert miles. Our forces have an ample supply, but a lot is used during the hot weather, so that the suppliers are kept very busy. All kinds of water-carriers are visible in the queue seen above, including the ubiquitous petrol tin (which is to be found everywhere in the East—it is almost a form of currency!)

A CAPTURED GERMAN WATER-TANK : Now used by one of our own soldiers. German preparations in this respect were as thorough as always; this is only one instance of the completeness of their equipment for desert warfare

THE SCENE OF ACTIVITY WITHIN OUR DEFENCE LINE AT TOBRUK : Here an enemy aircraft, shot down by A.-A. fire, is burning itself out within our lines. Although besieged, the Tobruk area is humming with activity ; as well as repelling enemy attacks, the garrison are always hard at work preparing fresh defences and new and stronger positions

A BIG FIRE IN THE DESERT : Caused by Australians who have blown up a dump of captured enemy ammunition which they find is of no use to them. The type of uniform worn at Tobruk is evidently designed more for comfort than show !

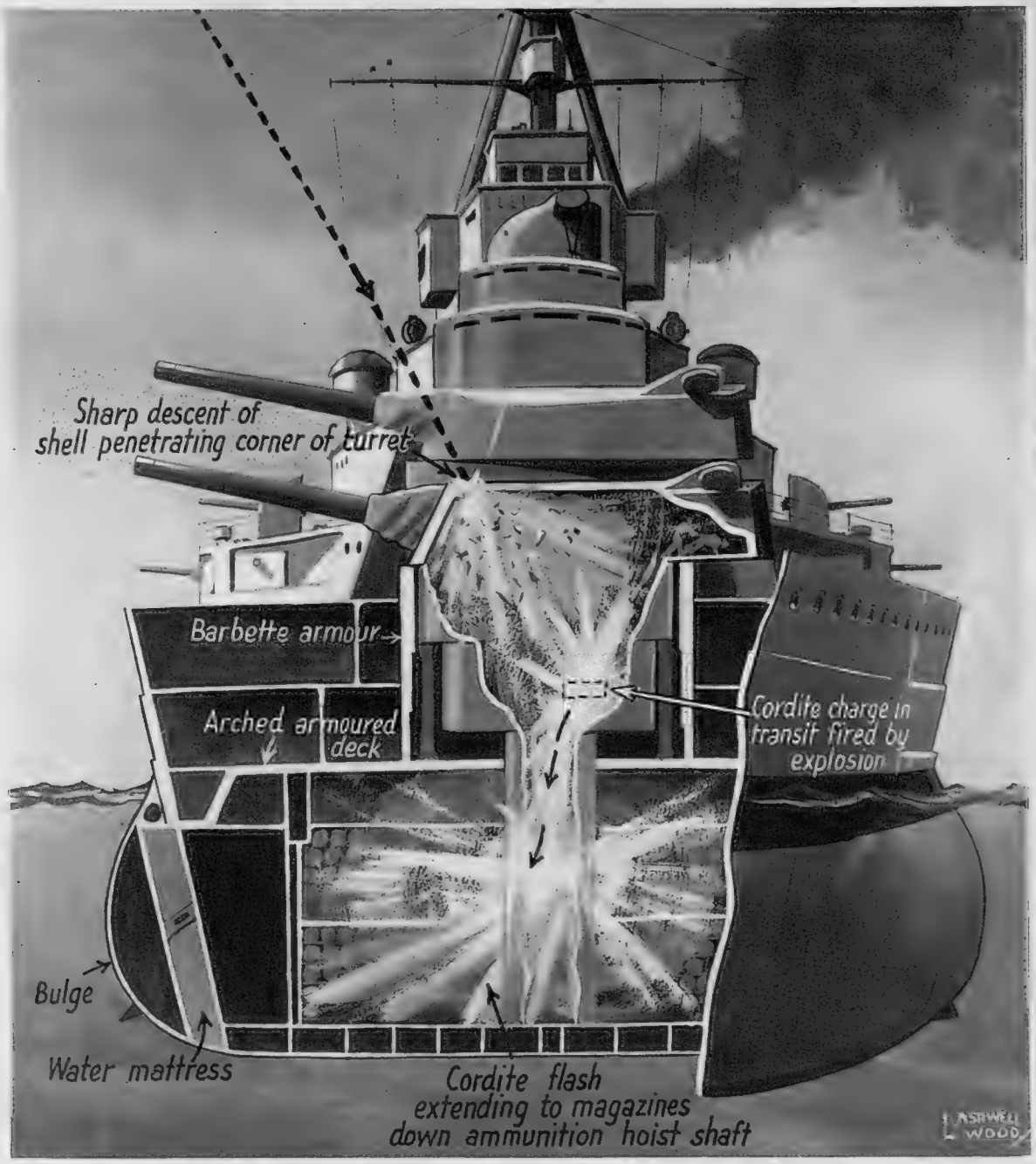
A CAPTURED GERMAN 3·7-IN. GUN : Plenty of useful ammunition was taken with this gun, which is here being tested by three British soldiers, all of whom are appropriately clothed for desert conditions. It will be remembered that much of the material captured from the Italians in the earlier operations in the desert was subsequently used in Greece

A MOBILE WORKSHOP GETS BUSY ON A GERMAN TANK : Members of the Royal Engineers are here hard at work dismantling a captured German tank. Apparently they are removing one of the guns : the treads have already been stripped off, or shot off. Note the cartridge-belt worn round the waist of one of the Sappers

IN THE MIDST OF A DESERT ENCOUNTER : During an action communications between the various desert out-posts are maintained by wireless. Here is the interior of the Control Room during an engagement between British and enemy tanks : the operator is seen speaking direct into the microphone. Each of the tanks carries a wireless mast, and it is possible to speak direct to Headquarters in the same way in which an aircraft can remain in wireless communication with its base

HOW THE BATTLE-CRUISER "HOOD" MET HER END

The Danger of the Plunging Shell to the Vulnerable Turrets of the Washington Treaty Type of Warship



A PLUNGING SHELL, DROPPING ALMOST VERTICALLY FROM VERY LONG RANGE, CAN PENETRATE THE TURRET AND FIRE THE CORDITE CHARGES: the flash then extends down to the magazine by way of the ammunition-hoist shaft and the ship explodes—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

THE tragic end of H.M.S. *Hood* has drawn attention, once again to a very serious weakness in the construction of certain vessels which were built under political considerations which it is not necessary to discuss here. The *Hood* was very frequently described as the most powerful warship in the world, but this was not an accurate description. She was indeed a mighty ship, but one possessing a dangerous weakness which, under certain conditions, might jeopardise the whole structure of the ship. This weakness lay in the armouring of the big gun turrets which, if they were unfavourably hit, might be pierced in such a manner as to cause explosion within the turret, detonation of the shells coming up the shell-hoist from the magazines below and the setting off of the ammunition in these magazines in one terrific explosion. The modern armour-piercing shell is designed to pierce armour and explode within the hull, turret or superstructure of a ship. This is what appears to have happened on board H.M.S. *Hood*. Owing to the length of the range, some thirteen miles, the shot was, presumably, of a sufficiently plunging character to break through the upper armour of the turret. Had the range been shorter the trajectory of the shell would have been flatter. It would have struck the thick armour of the circular barbette on which the turret revolves. Judging from the results of the Battle of Jutland this armour would not have been penetrated. The Prime Minister, in his *World Crisis* 1911 *to* 1918, draws attention to the fact that the plunging character of fire at long ranges had not been sufficiently guarded against in the armouring of decks and turret-roofs. He refers to the probability of the

(*Continued below on right*)

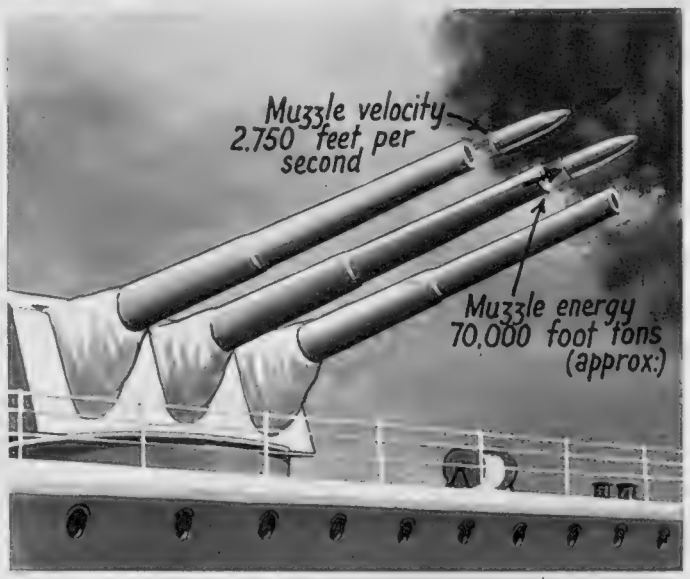
THE BATTLE-CRUISER "HOOD," 42,000-TON BATTLESHIP AND THE LARGEST WAR VESSEL IN COMMISSION IN THE WORLD—sunk by the German battleship "Bismarck" in the Denmark Strait off Greenland on May 24 and later avenged by the Royal Navy

WHEN FIRING AT EXTREME RANGES, AS WAS THE when it then descends

ALL modern ships are heavily armoured, both vertically on their sides and horizontally on their decks, in order to guard against both plunging shots and bombs from enemy aircraft. In the matter of armour the *Bismarck* was much more powerfully protected than her huge but comparatively thinly-armoured opponent. It has now been realised that the modern vessel cannot afford to obtain speed by a too great sacrifice of armour. It is better to be a Megatherium than a greyhound—at least, when it comes to combat between two almost evenly matched modern vessels of war.

The value of armour was demonstrated during the Battle of Jutland, and again Mr. Winston Churchill has some interesting comment to make in his *World Crisis*. He records that on no occasion did the heaviest German shell succeed in penetrating British armour over 7½ in. thick. All hits made on 9-in. armour were effectively resisted by the plates—the vitals of all British battleships engaged at Jutland were protected by 13-in., 12-in., 11-in., or at the very least, 9-in. armour.

It was undoubtedly owing to the lightness of her turret armour that the *Hood* was sent to the bottom in her combat with the *Bismarck*.



THE 15-IN. GUNS OF THE "BISMARCK" The charge in a gun varies according to the work to be done by the shell. If it is desired to pierce very heavy armour the charge will be increased. In the case of a 15-in. shell, one sack of cordite might be used, if the task before the shell was light; in another case, 2½ sacks might be used. The velocity of the shell would remain practically the same, but it would not have the same penetrating punch on arriving at its destination, which, if the aim were correct, would be a particular section of turret armour, superstructure or plating

(*Continued from above on left*)

Queen Mary, and *Indefatigable* having been destroyed by a flash down the ammunition-hoists such as we depict in the drawing above.

The danger of the flash of an explosion passing down this tube had been noted from the earliest days of ironclads, continues Mr. Churchill, but various reasons, such as the desire to maintain a rapid supply of shells to the guns and so forth, had tended to push this danger into the background. The perpetual antagonism between armour and speed had further tended to lessen the protection of certain vital parts which actual combat soon proved to be very vulnerable.

The *Lion*, during the Battle of Jutland, very nearly suffered the fate of the two armoured cruisers; only the heroism of a mortally wounded officer saved the ship from disaster.

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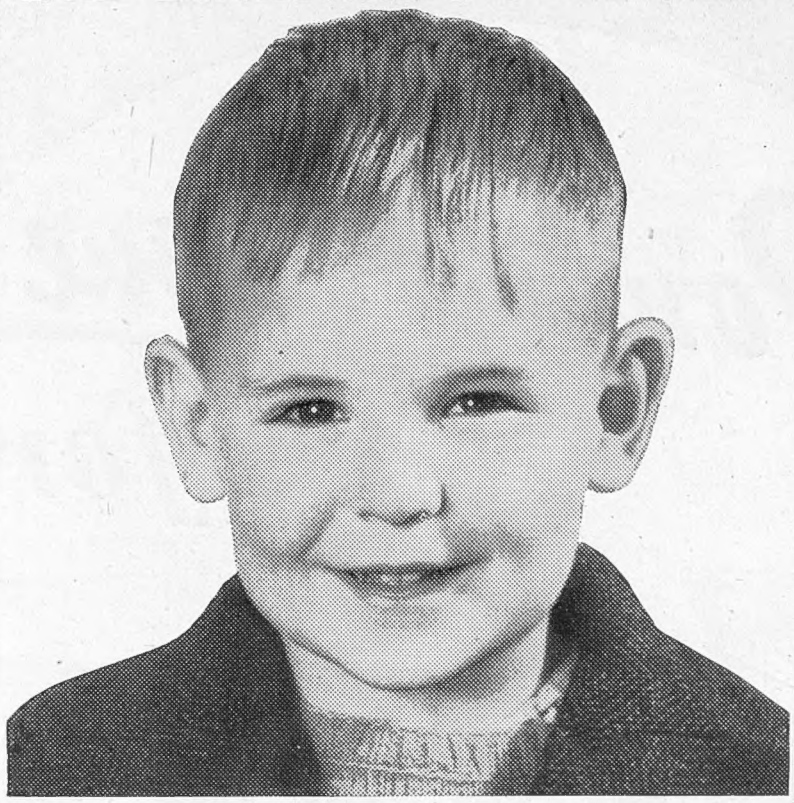

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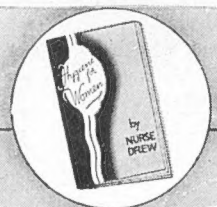

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

MR. JAMES JOHN HISSEY, who some fifty years ago took delight in travelling around England and Wales in a dog-cart, armed with sketch book and camera, had a *bête-noir*. He hated the railroad. Of the Iron Horse, or the fussy locomotive, as he often termed it, he had not a good word to say; so one wonders, as one follows him leisurely "Through ten English counties," what his attitude would be to that very essential mode of conveyance, the iron steed of to-day.

These and similar thoughts struck my mind when last week I renewed acquaintance with the upper reaches of the Thames. Where would those many hundreds of business and professional men be if they could not rely on the G.W.R. to convey them daily, speedily and mostly punctually to those many charming towns and villages to be found alongside the rivèr or nestling amidst the neighbouring slopes of the Chiltern Hills? An hour and ten minutes brought me from Paddington to the petite and picturesque township of Goring-on-Thames, where by car I reached, after some three miles, the tiny village of South Stoke, simple, sleepy and soul-satisfying. There was one store, one street, one "local," and, of many attractive houses, one which I sought out. It was not an hotel, an inn, or even a guest-house but a private house which is helping to fill a wartime need; and that is taking in as paying guests not more than two officers' wives, and their husbands, when they can get leave, and including in the amenities (excuse this hotel term) a most efficient nanny, prams, toys, animals, as well as all the advantages of a lovely garden and its contents. Young children, especially babies, are not welcomed in hotels, and there is great scope for accommodation such as I have described, and consequently I shall be glad to supply to anyone interested this Goring-on-Thames address and to hear of other similar places that I might visit. South Stoke is almost opposite the famed Beetle and Wedge at Moulsford, and it is there that the grown-ups, from my children's haven, repair to have their nightly "bottle."

During my week-end I was able to get a lift over to Nettlebed, and here at the White Hart, which abuts the Oxford Road, I was able to renew acquaintance with a house which is steeped in the spirit of hospitality. For some two years the White Hart has been in the capable hands of Mrs. Barbara Clements and well-fitted she is for her role.

On arriving, the chances are that you will get a personal greeting, for the Dispense serves the triple purpose of reception office, serving counter to the bar, and look-out post for "chance" arrivals. And plenty of the latter there are. In spite of rationing difficulties Mrs. Clements is the type of person who would hate refusing anyone a meal. Without showing any signs of bother she will take the trouble to see that no one is turned away, but in fairness to her you should ring up first Nettlebed 45.

As further proof of my contention that Mrs. Clements is a good hostess, I happened to be there on a Monday morning when several were leaving after the week-end. Without any exception all took the trouble to say "good-bye," and with such grateful thanks that one might have assumed that they were all unpaying guests! One other point worth noting about the White Hart. One room at least is reserved for leave purposes; so any officer and his wife who would like to take their leave near the river, should bespeak this room as far ahead as possible.

Nettlebed by train is best reached from Henley, another G.W.R. railhead which serves many a tucked-away spot in the locality.

It was not far, as I had the opportunity of a lift, to Harleyford Manor, near Marlow, and once again I reaped kudos for such a "find." In a graceful setting on the banks of Old Father Thames, this eighteenth-century country seat, and now a guest-house, looked particularly attractive in the spring sunshine. Served by Marlow Station, a little over two miles away, Harleyford is a superb dormitory for the man who has to go to town daily, or even occasionally. But perhaps the best-served station of all, Maidenhead excepted, is Twyford, with Grove Hall Hotel but a minute's walk away. Deliberately, I have said little of this admirable country-house hotel, with its wide expanse of parklands, because it has been, and probably still is, full. Yet every hotel has a vacancy at one time or another, and it is the sort of hotel which is well worth running down to see, and getting one's name on the waiting list—*if* you approve of Grove Hall and Mr. and Mrs. Tisdall approve of you!

Another hotel served from Twyford is the White Hart at Sonning, a splendid place to note down for a few days' breather; but, once again, be sure to book well ahead.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

W. S., Ilfracombe.—You ask for a country hotel within fifteen to twenty miles of Worthing, Sussex, with either a lift or a ground-floor bedroom. Lifts in country hotels are almost unknown, and the nearest point to Worthing in that respect will be the Crest Hotel at Crowborough, which is, in my opinion, quite get-at-able from Worthing. You are almost certainly likely to find it full at the moment, so I suggest you go over to see it and then ask for the first vacancy. Other hotels which are worth your investigation, though without lift, are the Birch Hotel, Haywards Heath, and the Gate House Private Hotel at Midhurst, Sussex.

C. P., Kensington.—The honeymoon problem is not so difficult of solution as you seem to think. Here is an admirable trio for the purpose. The Spread Eagle Hotel, Midhurst, Sussex. It is outside the defence area, so the question of permit does not arise. East Cloce Hotel, in the New Forest. It is situated about ten miles from Bournemouth, off the Lyndhurst-Christchurch road, and the postal address is Hinton, near Christchurch. A most admirable place to "moon" in. The third suggestion is Harleyford Manor, near Marlow, on the banks of the Thames. Provided you book your accommodation in good time, you will both be grateful to me for my suggestions.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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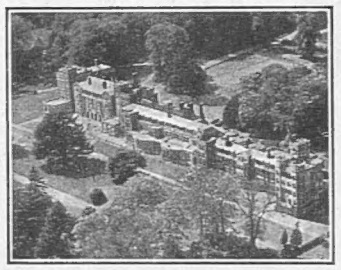

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Continued on facing page

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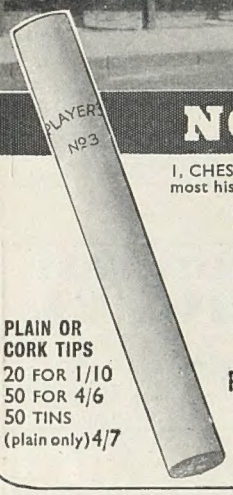

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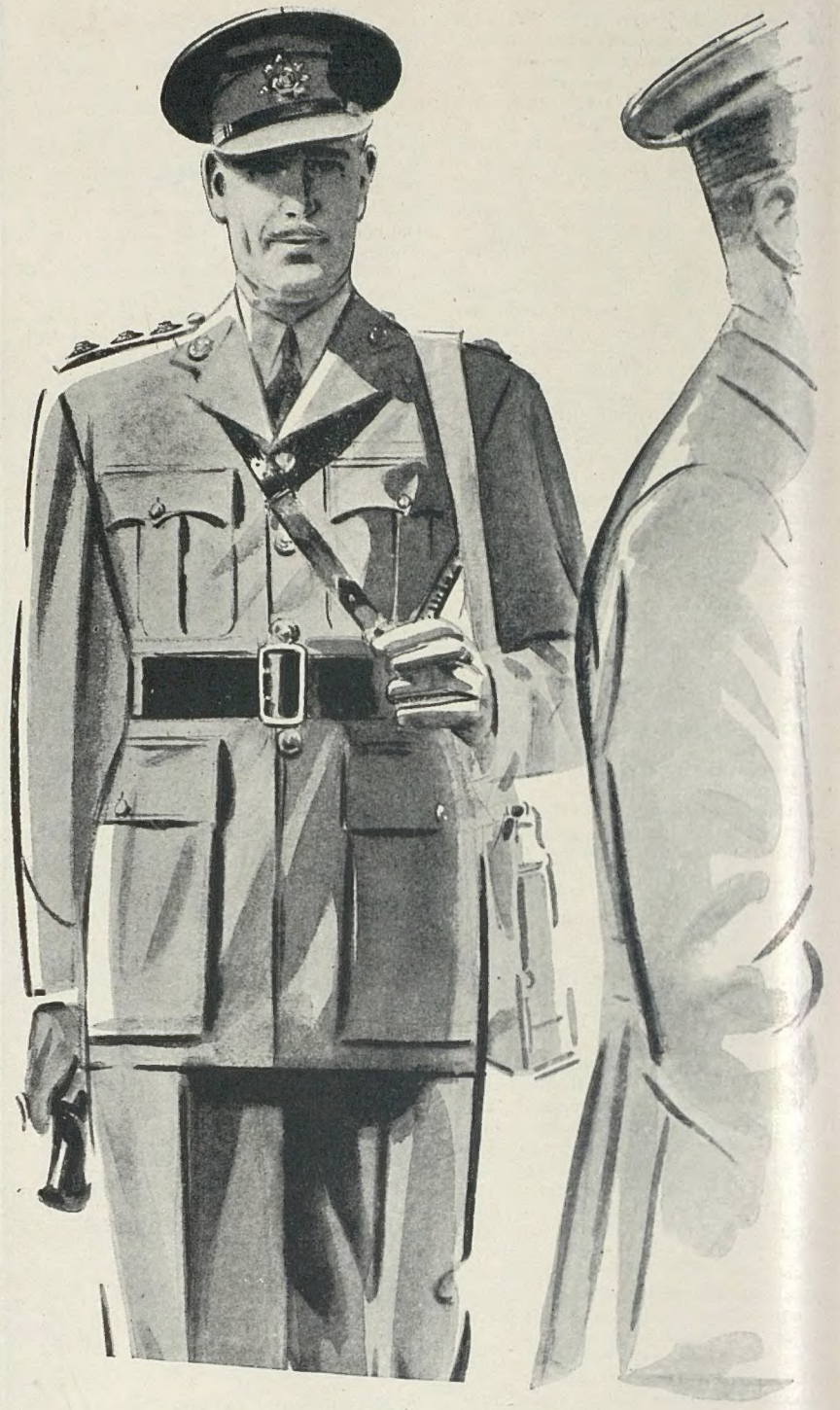

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